

AURI FAMES.

[A lady's gold watch-chain has been found in the gizzard of a fowl.]

MYSTERIOUS bauble! Come, read me the riddle,

What is the link 'twixt thy present and past?

What was thy story before in his middle
A fowl of the farmyard concealed thee
at last?

Back in thy past can I picture a present,
Bringing delight to a rapturous maid?
Haply the days of thy youth were as pleasant
Then, when but golden, as now when inlaid.

Was it thy fault that thou 'scapedst from
her pocket?

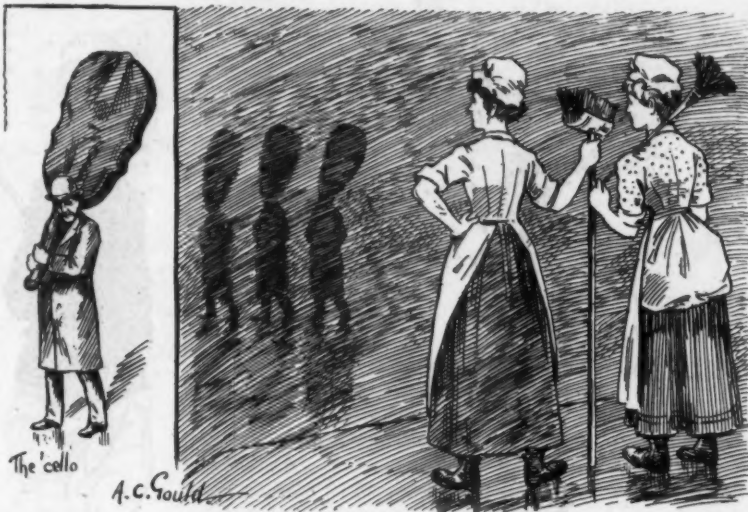
Was it misfortune—the way they are
built?

Kept she no watch on thee? Was it a
locket

Led thee astray by example of gilt?

I adjure thee by ÆSOP! Come, answer my
question:

How dost thou come to be aiding digestion?



PATRIOTISM DAMPED; OR, THE VAGARIES OF A LONDON FOG.

YOUTH AND THE STAGE.

[Mr. Langton, Solicitor, in applying for Licences on behalf of Mr. Beerbohm Tree to enable children to appear in the forthcoming production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, explained that elaborate arrangements had been made for the well-being, physical and educational, of the little ones. —*Daily Telegraph*, January 3.]



Of course, further arrangements will be made. An eminent German Professor will look after the musical education of the children.



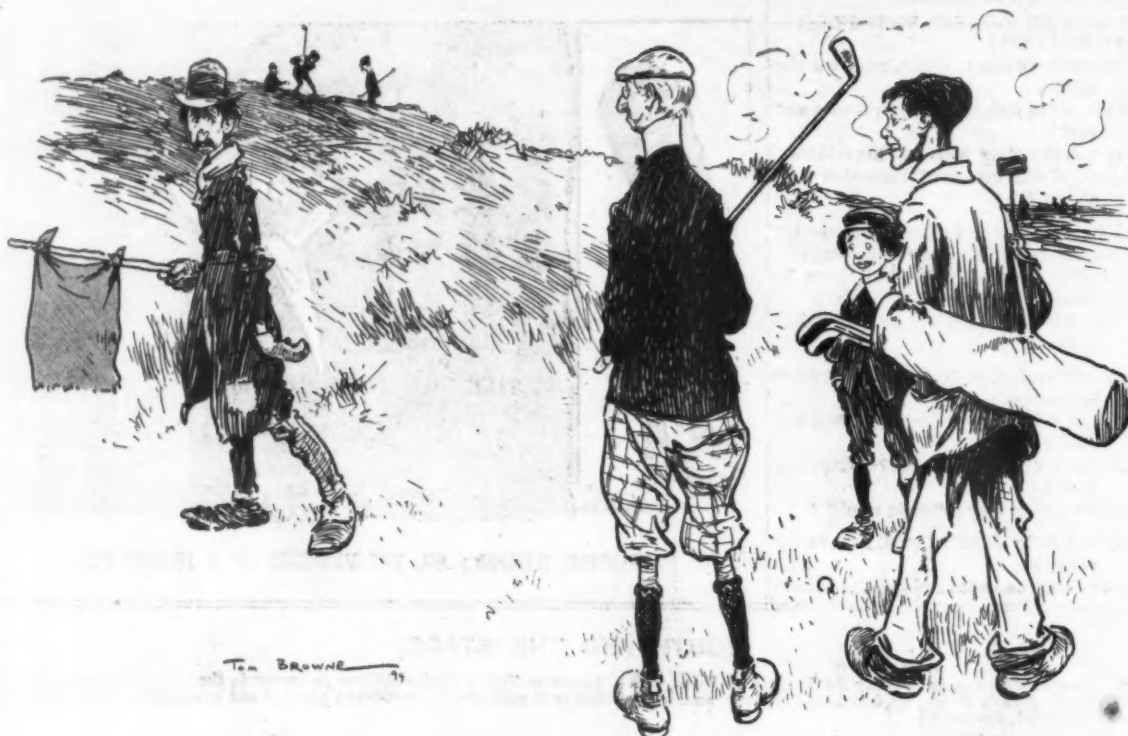
And a distinguished French scholar will teach the children the French language.



English, Roman History, and Astronomy will be taught by the most eminent Professors.



While Mr. Beerbohm Tree will undertake to personally conduct his little charges through the Lowther Arcade at least once a week.



EVERY MAN TO HIS TRADE.

Exasperated Amateur (to Fore-Caddie, who will not go on ahead). "GO ALONG, MAN. DO GET ON TOWARDS THE NEXT GREEN."
Caddie. "BEG PARDING, CAPTAIN. YOU WON'T NEVER GET HIM TO GO NO MORE THAN TWENTY YARDS AHEAD. 'E'S BEEN USED TO CARRYING A FLAG IN FRONT OF A STEAM-ROLLER."

"CÆLUM NEC ANIMUM MUTANT."
 (Diary of one who "can't stand winter time in England.")

Monday.—Horridly cold to-day. Great mistake to be in England at the end of December. All very well to talk about spending Christmas at home and that kind of thing, but give me sunshine. Frost and snow very seasonable things no doubt, but if winter isn't an agreeable season in England, it's no great praise of the weather to call it seasonable.

Tuesday.—Colder than ever. Sleet too this morning. This is too bad. Why not go to Paris? Not very far after all, and it's always bright in Paris. Pack up at once: 11 A.M. Victoria.

Wednesday.—Have gone to Paris. Colder than London. Raining too. No use to stay in Paris when it rains. Perfectly ridiculous to take all the trouble to cross the Channel in order to find exactly the same weather the other side. Can't bear being ridiculous. Shall go on to Florence. Florence very agreeable place, I'm told. Shall start to-morrow.

Thursday.—Florence. Ugh! Fifteen degrees of frost, and not a fire in the hotel. Heated throughout with hot water. Bah! Give me an English coal

fire, and I can put up with cold weather. But without a fire—. Shall go on to Rome first thing to-morrow morning. Often heard of people "wintering in Rome." Sounds promising. Guide book says agreeable winter climate. Rome by all means.

Friday.—Agreeable winter climate! Might as well be in Russia. No fires again, of course. "All the passages heated," says the Manager. But I can't live in a passage. And the smoking-room is like an ice-house. Am sitting at this moment in an overcoat with my legs wrapped up in a rug and my hat on. Shall try Naples to-morrow. "The Sunny South." Just the place to cure the cold which I feel coming on. Continue notes at Naples.

DEPRESSION.

Disconsolate Author (gazing at list of subscriptions to the Transvaal Refugees' Fund). Afraid my new book will stand no chance of selling, now. With all the public devoting their money to good works—

Cynical Friend (interrupting). You naturally think that *yours* wouldn't stand much chance, eh?

THE SWING OF THE PENDULUM.

(A Prophecy for 1901.)

SIR WILLIAM will occupy the Woolsack. The toast of the London County Council will be received with wild enthusiasm.

The French Generals will be entertained at the Service Clubs.

Bicyclists will be the most popular of men.

SHAKESPEARE will be played to crowded houses without scenery.

The public will insist upon giving their military rank to officers of the Militia.

The Northern lines will be admonished to imitate the sterling qualities of the Southern railways.

The Poet-Laureate, amidst universal approbation, will accept a peerage.

The pen will have the pull of the pencil in journalism.

The House of Lords will, in the popular estimation, be considered infinitely superior to the House of Commons.

The army will attract more attention than the navy.

And, finally, the statue to CROMWELL outside Westminster Hall will be supplied with an entirely pleasing pendant in the shape of a stone effigy of KRÜGER.



UNAUTHORISED WAR RUMOURS. THE LENO LIGHT HORSE!

THE REPORT THAT COLONEL SIR DANIEL LENO IS RAISING A SQUADRON OF LIGHT HORSE, DRAWN ENTIRELY FROM STAGE CIRCLES, IS, WE REGRET TO LEARN, WITHOUT FOUNDATION.



VERY SMALL TALK.

"EAR-RINGS ARE ALL THE GO NOW, AREN'T THEY? ARE YOU HAVING YOUR EARS PIERCED?"

"NO. I'M ONLY HAVING THEM BORED!"

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

SIR ALGERNON WEST is the youngest-mannered Methuselah of my Baronite's acquaintance. His *Recollections*, just published by SMITH, ELDER, go back to the year 1832. As a matter of fact he was born a few months before the Reform Bill. He remembers running a race with the Duke of WELLINGTON down the grass hill to Walmer Castle. Presumably he came in last, and his otherwise innocent childhood was marred by vengeful feeling. However that be, he soon after flung a stone which nearly hit the Duke—probably on the nose, that being a prominent feature. "Who taught you to throw stones?" said the Duke, standing the onslaught with the cool courage that might be expected from the victor of Waterloo. "My brother RICHARD, Sir," said ALGY, with faint but distinct reminiscence of ADAM's answer when challenged with respect to the missing apple. "I hope," said the Duke, and this is worth remembering, "he will soon teach you something better than that." Striking testimony to Sir ALGERNON's antiquity appears on the face of another sentence, also relevant to Walmer Castle. "Lord and Lady SALISBURY and their children, who were always running on the beach without shoes and stockings, spent some Autumns there." The idea of Lord SALISBURY running on the beach without shoes or stockings is alluring; but on closer consideration it is probable that Sir ALGERNON alludes only to the children. There is, later on, another unexpected peep at the Prime Minister, who was the Recollector's contemporary at Oxford. He once played a rubber of whist in a room at Peckwater with Lord ROBERT CECIL, our Premier's then style; WARD HUNT, afterwards Chancellor of the Exchequer; and a fourth

partner, the four averaging six feet three inches in height. Sir ALGERNON regretted, when he went to Oxford, that he had not adopted cricket instead of rowing. Of course, if he had, he would have been long stop. Great-great-grandson of ROBERT WALPOLE, married to a granddaughter of Earl GREY, young WEST was predestined for a public career. He early found the opportunity, and he has filled it not only with distinction, but with a tact and good-nature that have made him troops of friends. There are few men living who have come in closer contact with a singularly wide range of men, and have not made a single enemy. A shrewd observer, with a keen sense of humour, always living with interesting people, Sir ALGERNON's *Recollections* form one of the pleasantest books of the year. They bubble with good stories admirably told. The descriptions of London in his youth and early manhood are a sort of prose Trivia.

MISS BRADDON has always proved herself an able writer of society stories, and in *His Darling Sin* (SIMPKIN & Co.) she once again empties the whole bag of tricks for our edification. The *coulisses* of the fashionable world, its great ladies and their little scandals, murders and law-suits, and those marvellous detectives who vie with LECOQ himself in their instinctive knowledge of everything about everybody,—they are all here again; and if the prolific authoress's legion readers still clamour for these things, who shall complain that she supplies them?

In *Singing-Time* (CONSTABLE) the prettiest of compliments is paid to the intelligence of children by Messrs. ARTHUR SOMERVELL and L. LESLIE BROOKE. Miss AGNES REPLIER, in one of her delightful songs, has pictured the polite tolerance with which the children of SOUTHEY must have listened to that poet when he came into the nursery to recite "How the water comes down at Lodore;" the masterpiece which he had dedicated to his innocent boy. Whoever these other more fortunate children may be, the happy "VIOLA, KATHERINE, and LEONARD," to whom the book before us is inscribed, it is clear that both musician and artist have thought that no work in their honour could be too well done. In their labour of love they have even taken the pains to do all the letters and notation with their own hands. It is a song-book good to sing from, whether you are child or only wish you were. So says my Nautical Retainer.

Villette comes as the third volume of the Haworth Edition of the life and works of CHARLOTTE BRONTE and her sisters, issued in monthly numbers by SMITH, ELDER. Like its predecessors it is beautifully printed, neatly bound, and illustrated with some interesting plates. Amongst them is a portrait of M. HÉGER, CHARLOTTE's principal in the school at Brussels, who figures largely in the novel. (His face, by the way, bears a strong resemblance to that of the late Sir GEORGE BOWEN in rare moments of repose.) Mrs. HUMPHRY WARD continues her introductory notes. After the carping at *Jane Eyre*, it is pleasant to find that *Villette* meets with fuller favour at the hands of a sister novelist. From the chapter my Baronite learns what is news to him, that *Graham Bretton*—Dr. John—is a character founded upon a study of Mr. GEORGE SMITH, still at the head of the great firm which, not having had the opportunity of consulting Mrs. HUMPHRY WARD, laid the world under everlasting obligation by publishing *Jane Eyre*. The secret out, it is no wonder to find Dr. John one of the most charming characters in the novel.

THE BARON DE B.-W.

AGREED ALL ROUND.

THE following advertisement appears in the *Daily News*:

YOUNG JOURNALIST.—Contributor leading weeklies, editorial experience, seeks CHANGE. Specialities: fire-arms and shooting.

Doubtless the desire for a change is fully shared by the colleagues of the advertiser. In the necessarily limited area of the average newspaper office, a journalist, however young, whose specialities are fire-arms and shooting, is an embarrassing companion.

'INTS ON 'UNTING BY 'ARRY.



IF YOU SEE WILLOWS ALONG A FENCE, PUT ON THE FACE; THERE'S SURE TO BE A DITCH—



OR, MIGHT BE A CANAL!

ONE AMONGST OUR NEW-YEAR HOPES.

THE New Woman lived in a part of the town
Where very few men lived, and none of them good;
Her wardrobe was scant—only one yellow gown—
And scorn of mankind was her best-relished food.

Her joys were akin to the Red Indian's joys,—
With flourishing scalp-knife the war-path to pace;
She never went shopping for nick-nacks or toys,
But only to meet with and slap a man's face.

She had but one purpose—to "live her own life"
In ecstatic self-worship—a sweet little plan!
There, there, where all lovely emotions were rife,
With ANNUNZIO, IBSEN, and chaste SUDERMANN!

In the clear amber light of their teaching, she wrote
Books as freely as water in gutters will flow,
Which newspapers noticed but seldom dare quote—
From dread of Lord CAMPBELL's enactment, you know!

Some admirers she had who preached about Art
And the sin of restricting its beautiful right
To prefer, at its pleasure, the scavenger's cart
To Oberon's car, and in dirt find delight.

Chacun à son goût.—Art still goes on its way
With a palette unladen with gamboge and chrome,—
And, I fancy, will go on for many a day,
When no one will find the New Woman "at home."

Even now, is she living or dead?—the deuce knows;
And further, I'm sure, I don't care to enquire.
She came like a scent that was not of the rose—
I hope she's dissolved in congenial mire!



Small Boy (who is somewhat cramped for room). "ARE YOU STILL THERE, BILLY?
I THOUGHT YOU WERE LOST."

CAT'S MEAT SQUARE.

["At an inquest held on a child that died of consumption, it was stated in evidence that eight people lived in the room, ten feet square, the rent of which was 4s. 6d. a week. The room was situated in a notoriously overcrowded district known as 'Cat's Meat Square'."—*Daily Paper.*]

AIR! AIR! AIR!
What is a body to breathe?
The pestilent vapours that poison and seethe
In Cat's Meat Square?—
Hark to the cry of despair!
Look at the misery there!
Children are lying
In sickness, and crying—
Children are dying
For air.

Eight in a horrible den,
Reeking of sickness and death!
Crowded together like sheep in a pen,
Stifling for want of a breath.
Women and children and men
Huddled like rats in a hole,

And lulled, as they lie,
By the agonised cry
Of a perishing soul.

Air! Air! Air!
Life-giving breath of the sky!
Out on the tyrant that dares to deny
The poor his share!
Out on the monster that rack-rents this
sty,
This plague-stricken lair!
Justice! O Justice! How long
Ere thou rescue the weak from the strong?
How long shall the poor give their lives
To an ogre that thrives
On a crime and a wrong?
Ah! If there be laws, as they say,
And if there be hearts that can
care,
Put an end to the horrors that darken our
day!
Air! Give us air!
Away with these fever-dens! Sweep them
away
With the pitiless Harpies that batten and
prey
On Cat's Meat Square!

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

(SOME SPECIMEN LETTERS ADDRESSED TO
VARIOUS EDITORS.)

(Forwarded per A. A. S.)

SIR,—On December 31st, 1899, as the clock was striking midnight, we packed up our 1900th bottle of Automatic Hair-wash (which has created such a *furor* in fashionable circles, price 3s. 6d. only), and started upon the next hundred. The Twentieth Century has therefore begun.

Yours obediently,

DE CAPILLE, Ltd.

SIR,—The Christian era started at 0 years 0 months 0 days 0 hours 0 minutes 0 seconds. When it was one second old, it was dated 0 years 0 months 0 days 0 hours 0 minutes 1 second A.D. I think nobody will deny this. Consequently, when it was two seconds old, it follows quite clearly that the date was 0 years 0 months 0 days 0 hours 2 seconds. Proceeding thus carefully second by second (every second is of equal importance), we shall not, I imagine, find a single opponent left to confute the contention that we are now in the 20th century.

J. Y. BABBAGE,
President of the

Statistical Babbler's Asylum.

Dated: 1900 years 1 month 5 days
12 hours 20 minutes 15 seconds.

SIR,—I am a firm believer in the German Emperor, and a martyr to the cause of my belief. Having been further convinced by Sir COURTENAY BOYLE, and by actual experiment in counting 0, 1, 2, 3... up to 99, that £99 is change for a hundred-pound note, I am now starting the new century under remand. It is, I am afraid, quite clear from the bigoted turn of mind of the presiding Magistrate, that this year will be a year 0, as far as I personally am concerned. It could not, therefore, be the last year of the nineteenth century.

Yours regretfully,

Jan. 5, 1900.

AN EX-CASHIER.

DERE SIR,—I had a birthday this morning and mammy says I interred my tenth yere. Daddy says you inter a thing wen it is finished and dun with; I have therefor dun with ten and must be eleven by now tho I was borne in 1891 I think the rithmytic must be rong sumware daddy could not be becos he rites to the Times and says it is now the new sentry in fack the middel of nex weak alreddy. Think-ing yow wood like to no I am
yore loving

5 Jan. 1900.

TOMMY WROTAR.

CONCLUSIVE.

Mr. Boskins (after reading correspondence on the subject of the commencement of the Century). As for me, I don't care a hang whether I'm a centurian or not, but if a man owes me a hundred pounds, I'm blowed if I let him off with ninety-nine.



A COUNCIL OF PATIENCE.

SCENE—The Camp, Downing Street. Agamemnon, MARQUES OF S.L.S.B.-BY; Menelaus, MARQUES OF L.N.S.D.-WNE; Nestor, DUKE OF D.V.N.S.H.-RE; Ulysses, MR. CH.-MB.-BL.-N; and others.

The ample proposition that hope makes
In all designs begun on earth below,

Falls in the promised largeness: checks and disasters
Grow in the veins of actions highest rear'd.

Agam.
Princes,
What grief hath set the jaundice on your cheeks?

Troilus and Cressida, Act I., Scene 3.



THINGS BETTER LEFT UNSAID.

He. "AWFULLY FUNNY THING HAPPENED TO ME THE OTHER DAY. I WAS BEST MAN TO MY OWN GRANDFATHER."

She. "REALLY? HOW FUNNY! HADN'T HE EVER BEEN MARRIED BEFORE?"

LITTLE QUEENIE'S GUIDE TO DOLLHOUSE ETIQUETTE.

(A Complete Manual of Nursery Manners and Customs.)

II.—ALL ABOUT LEVING CARDS, WHAT TO LEVE, AND ON WHO.



WHEN a new doll comes to the Nursery it is customary, provided the doll is unconnected with Trade and unobjectionable in other ways, for all the leading members of Society to leave cards.

This shows they desire to be naberly and it doesn't matter whether they are "Snap" or "Animil Grab" but it is incorrect to turn them up at the corner.

Sometimes you leave cards on New comers that, although they are not strictly

dolls, still they may be desirable acquaintances and useful people to know, like a plaster figure full of sweeties or the casteyon person with the monybox who takes a place on the nursery mantlepiece.

But to leave a card on a mere animil, like a white rabbit or wooly cokatoo, would betray grosse ignirans of the usiges of good Society.

After a sutible interval, which should never excede five minutes, the new cumer has to leave a card or a historicle domano on each inhabitent in return, but does not ask if they are at home which would be bad taste.

Then each inhabitent leaves another card and the new cumer leaves one on them and so they go on till they are tired out.

Praps you may think there is not much sence in all this, but it is what kepes Sosiety together.

ABOUT CAULING AND CONVERSATION.

When enuff cards have been left to brake the ice then it is time to begin cauling.

Let us suppose it is your best doll and she wishes to pay a formel caul.

Having thuraly washed her face (unless it is paint that comes off) and put her hat strate, and seen that she has both shoes on and propaly butoned, you accompany her to wherever the new doll is and inquire if she is at home and if the anser is No, it means that she does not desire to continue the aquaintence, so you simply say 'How lucky!' and go away. At least Mother does, so it *must* be all rite.

But suppose she is in, then you will have to do the tauking for both dolls, because they are always shy about conversing outloud.

It is most important to select just the rite toppics, as dolls hate being made to tauk about anything they don't understand, like novils and pollytics, which are never diseused in really good Sosiety.

Some people, such as my sister MABLE, genally make their dolls begin with the wether, but this is a silly stuffy toppic and should be left to groanups.

What dolls do enjoy is tauking about their servants. You can make your doll say she has a pufree treshur of a cook, only she will spend most of the time lying under the kichen dreser, and how thoutless of nurse to go and leve the mekanikle pig all night in baby's cradel, and etsetra.

Then the new doll says no one would beleve the truble she has with hers, and her parlurmade is leving her just when she had lern't to dress hare to mary the plaster groom in Brother FRANKY's stabels, but servants are so inconsidrit and never studdy anybody's convinence except their own, and you can go on like that ever so long if nurse is out of the room.

Then your doll asks the other has she got to know many of the naburs yet, and tells her about them how stupid they are and what boaring parties they give, tho of corse one must go to them ocasionaly or they think it so unfrendly of you.

And at the end your doll says she's afrade she must be runing away, and she is always at home the second Tuseday and third Friday every other month and will the other doll remember.

Then go, being careful to leve an Animil Grab card outside, which is for the Doll's husband, if any.

If not, or a widdow, leve a 'Happy Famales' card insted.

HOW TO BE AT HOME AND RECEVE CAULERS.

First you must settle when it is your doll's At Home Day, and if she has a dollhouse of her own, see that the droynroom is thuraly tidey and free from bedroom furnichur, briks, and glass marbles, which kepe on geting in whatever you do, and I beleve it is TOMMY does it.

Then unhook the front of the dollhouse, which signafies she is at home, and sit your doll on the best chare by the mantlepiece, with the teathings close by.

Never alow a puter teaset in the droynroom it is dredfully boorshuaw. Direcly the other doll is shown in, make your doll say How swete of you to come, and the other doll will probly anser she has been dying to for absalute ages only somehow one never can find time to see anything of one's rele frends.

If the cauler is a gentelman doll, he will remove his hat as a mater of corse, unless it is not ment to take off, in which case it will be qite corect for him to retane it on.

A Gentelman doll begins conversing by saying was your doll in the Park that morning, and will he see her at the Dutches of Dumpshire's to-night, and yours says she doesn't know, she has so many things on this evening—but I'm sure Mother doesn't know any dutcheses and I don't beleve Mr. BLUFFEY does ether.

Each cauler on his arival should be ofered make beleve tea and pritense cake or bred and buter.

Then you tauk as alreedy explained, till the cauler gets up to take his leve and your doll says must you realy be going alreedy we have had no tauk at all, and after the other has left yours must say she thouht that tiresome little man (or woman) was never going.

Unless you keep up cauling you can never expect to become realy intamit. Next time I am going to tell you all about enteranting and the propper way to manige your parties, but here I must lay down my pen as it is seoolroom tea, and I haven't washed my hands yet so no more this week from

Your loving little QUENIE.

(N.B.—The Composition and Spelling of the above revised and corrected by F. ANSTREY.)

A RETROSPECT AND REFERENCE.—“Is the old min friendly?” Certainly he is, meaning General FÉVRIER up to a certain point. General FÉVRIER's laudatory comments on the British soldier, as given by the Paris Correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, were decidedly not hostile. A great General of this name, if not absolutely and entirely favourable to us, was, on one momentous occasion, decidedly fatal to our enemy. See *Mr. Punch's* impressive cartoon, February, 1855.



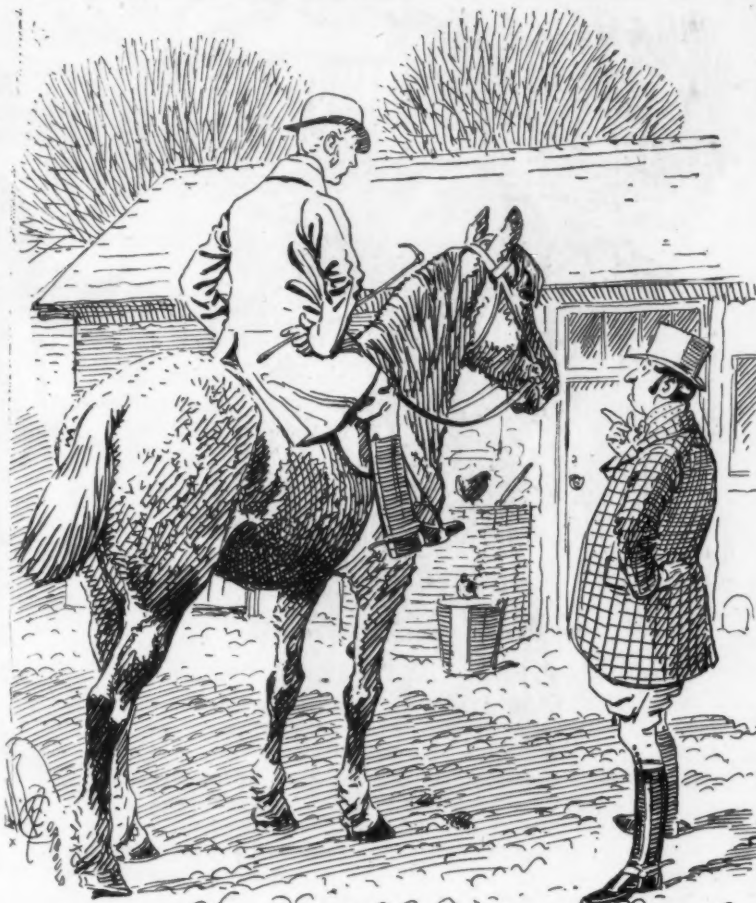
G. R. Haskett.

THE RISE OF KING COAL.

The British Householder beseeches King Coal to come down a few shillings lower—sirging:—

“Old King Coal is a merry old soul,
And he likes his bit of fun;
But he caried the joke a trifle far
When he rose ten bob a ton!”

[“In Edinburgh and Glasgow they have increased by about forty per cent.”—*Westminster Gazette*.]



Customer. “YOU TOLD ME THAT THIS ‘OSS ‘AD WON A DOZEN MATCHES AGIN SOME O’ TH’ BEST ‘OSSES IN THE COUNTY. WHY ‘E CAN’T TROT A MILE IN TEN MINUTES TO SAVE ‘IS LIFE.”

Dealer. “I DIDN’T SAY ‘E COULD. YOU NEVER ASKED ME WHAT SORT O’ MATCHES. IT WAS IN PLOUGHIN’ MATCHES ‘E TOOK THE PRIZES!”

NOS ET MUTAMUR.

[“The necessities of life may be purchased for £2,000 a year.”—*The Times*.]

At a long past day,
At a date of which
My knowledge isn't clear,
A man, they say,
Was passing rich
On forty pounds a year.
A dusty tome

He reckoned bliss,
As he conned it beside the fire
In his trim-kept home,
And he thought that this

Was all man could desire.
No doubt, he'd see
That folk like me
Had something very far wrong with
them;
But times do change,

And it would be strange
If we didn't change along with them.

I care not, I,
For your dusty tome,
But I love the oysters at PIM's,
And I gladly fly
From the mutton at home
To a delicate dinner at JIM's.
The best of wine
And the best cigar
From the Caribbean Sea,
Let these be mine!
Such trifles are
Necessities to me.
The couple of thou.
That the *Times* allow
Is running it close, unless it is
Distinctly meant
To be only spent
Upon the strictest necessities.



"WELL, SAUNDERS, WHAT SORT OF WEATHER HAVE YOU BEEN HAVING WHILE I 'VE BEEN AWAY?"
 "IT'S BIN 'UST SHOCKIN', MISSY. FUST IT FRIZ, AN' THEN IT THEW AN' THEN IT SNEW; AN' THEN IT THEW AGIN AN' FRIZ ON IT!"

THE BOOK OF BEAUTY.

A GREAT THOUGHT FOR EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR.

IN MONTHLY PARTS.

II.—THE BODLEY HEAD SECTION.

(For January, continued.)

JAN. 18TH.—The crenelled bastion scaled the sky;
 The careless city slept below;
 From off his vantage-seat, pardie!
 Crash fell Sir UMPPIO D'UMPTIO!

His shattered members strawed the plain;
 In vain the King cried out for dole;
 The mounted infantry in vain
 Essayed a mournful caracole.

The chargers held their bits and wailed;
 The heir-apparent rived his gear;
 Not less the total knighthood failed
 To reconstruct their stricken peer.

J-hn D-v-ds-n.

19TH.—Khaki has the colour of secretiveness; but the robin wears a cuirass that recalls the published blood. Yet is there also a privacy of the woods, where the bird takes on the tone of his environment. The ancients felt this when they discovered a note of khaki in the flutings of Philomel. *Mrs. M-y-n-ll.*

20TH.—Rye's¹ son, chi's² son, son of a gorgio³ gun,
 Romany,⁴ rawni's⁵ tarno⁶, vardey⁷ an' gries⁸ an' all,
 Kollo⁹ wi' tuv¹⁰ in the puv¹¹, and lollo¹² o' nock¹³ wi' the
 sun:—

Dukkerin¹⁴ keep 'em and bring 'em palall,¹⁵ palall.
Th-d-re W-tts-D-nt-n.

[Guide to language:—Gentleman¹, gipsy-girl², gentile³, gipsy⁴, lady⁵, gentleman⁶, waggons⁷, horses⁸, black⁹, smoke¹⁰, field¹¹, red¹², nose¹³, good-luck¹⁴, back¹⁵.]

21ST.—Passive, through the numbing thralldom of tradition,
 we women hanker to vibrate to some masterful Ideal.

G-rge Eg-rt-n.

22ND.—Our beauty lies dormant till the Right One shall come for its awakening. If the Fairy Prince is late through oversight, or otherwise detained, we must go out to meet him by the way; we must encourage him to scare us into surrender.—*The same.*

23RD.

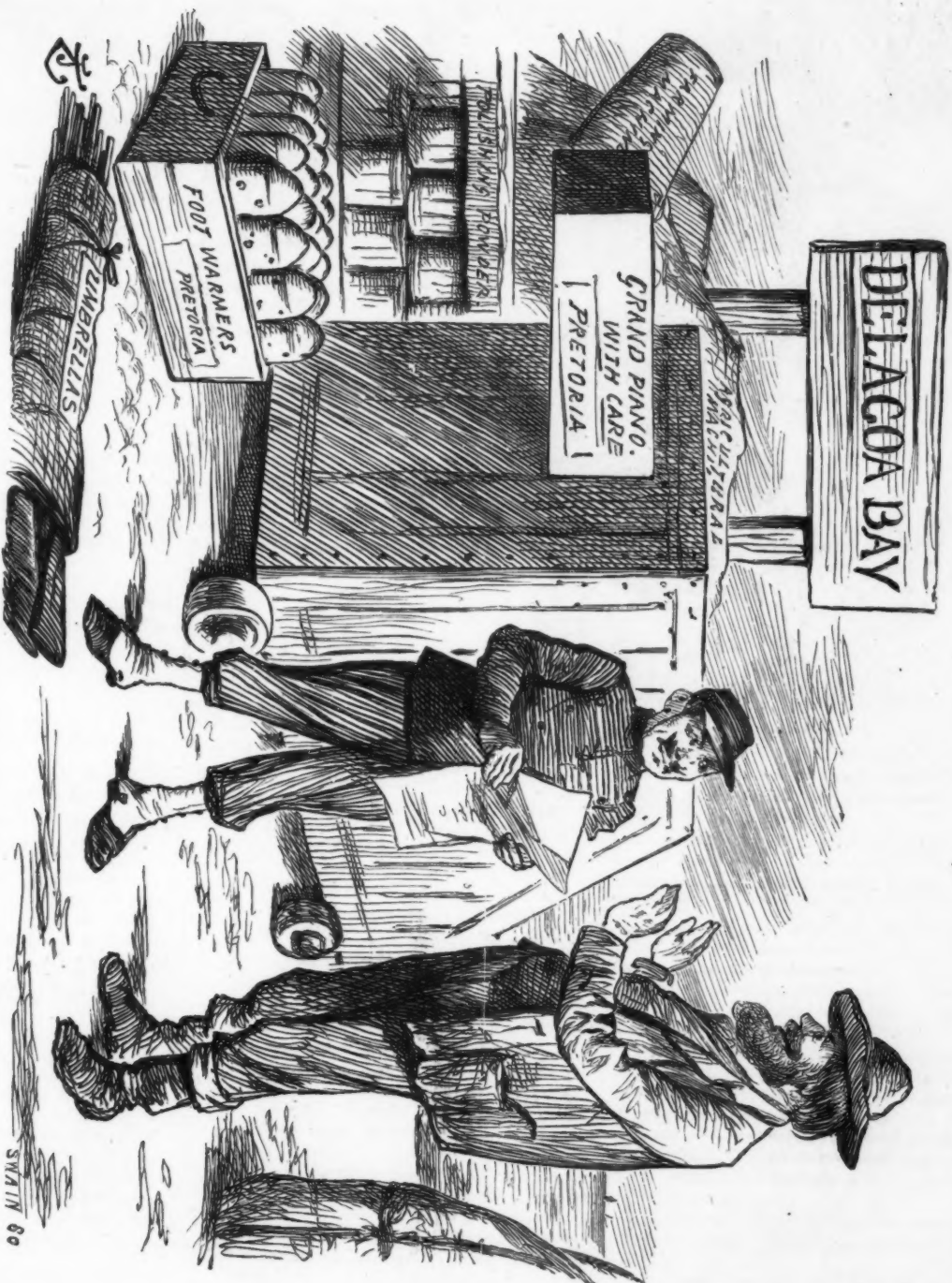
I hark the cry of the peoples, the little and honest and poor,
 The plea of the Pole, the mew of the Manx, the bray of the Boer.

R. le G-ll-nne.

24TH, 25TH.—[The same: one day for each of the little peoples.]

26TH. New Atalantas, straining fast and far,
 How shall the old Milanions hope to beat?
 On what incalculable motor-car
 Follow the trailing thunders of their feet?

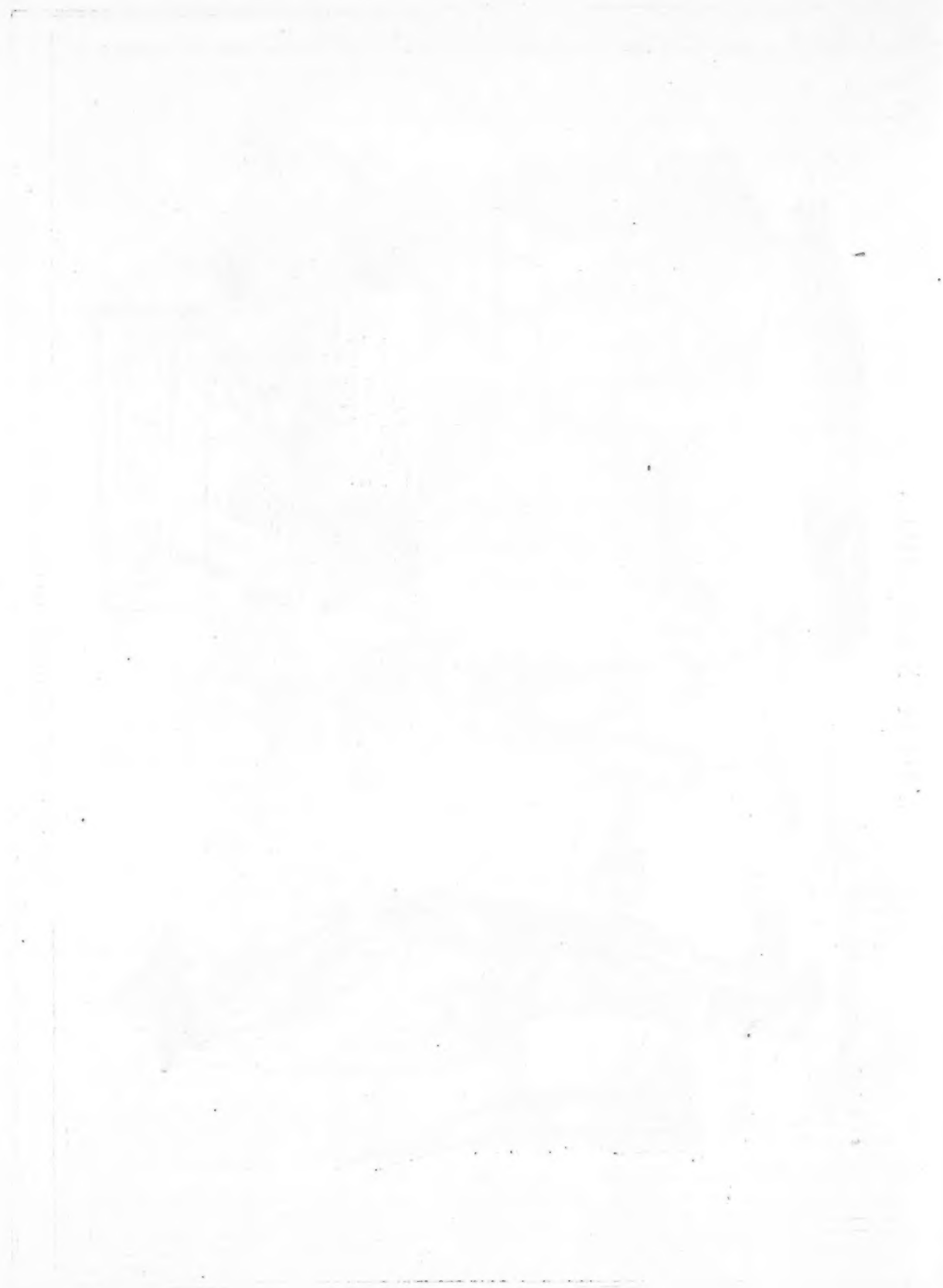
W. W-ts-n.



“THE OPEN DOOR.”

(And the closed eye.)

PORTUGUESE CUSTOMS OFFICER. “ANYTHING TO DECLARE? NOTHING CONTRABAND, I HOPE?”
BOER. “OH DEAR ME, NO!”



l
a
l
s
v
f
i
e

T

Th

An

In

Or

27TH.—Gravity is the soul of wit.—M-x.

28TH.—What is this talk of my affectations? As well might we arraign our BRUMMEL on a charge of elegant posturing. As of need there must be modes, so must there ever be men to set them.—*The same.*

29TH. Her purple breathing smote the air;
"Ride forth," she said; he said, "I shall;"
He gripped his hunter by the hair,
And plunged to meet his Orde-al!

J-hn D-v-ds-n.

30TH.—'Tis of Hebe. 'Tis of the divine parlour-maid I sing the quest; that happy handful of endearing frills! Ah! the white purity of these fifteen-carat girls! Little baggages!

R. le G-ll-nne.

31ST.—ABDUL! Because just now elsewhere we seek
Bloody erasure of a rankling debt,
Lay not your tongue too lightly in your cheek!
Shameless! I have my eye upon you yet!

W. W-ts-n.

O. S.

OUR SPECIAL CHRISTMAS TREE AT HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.—Mr. BEERBOHM TREE, requiring a lot of little children to serve as fairies in his *Midsummer Night's Dream*, applied for a licence to raise his infantry regiments. The enterprising Manager obtained the leave and licence, but, observed his agent sadly, "there will be eighteen forms to fill up." Well, they will be well filled up with good food if these be the children's forms; and if the forms mean the seats in front, surely the intended attraction will be so great as not to leave one form, or even one seat, empty.

Q. What's the use of a handle to a name?

A. Why, to turn it—to account, of course.

NEW BOOK BY A CRUSHED ONE.—*The Sorrows of Sat on.*

WARLIKE OPERATION IN TIME OF PEAS.—Shelling.

MR. PUNCH'S MUSEUM.



"BOBS."

AN INDIAN IDOL—AS WORSHIPPED BY MR. THOMAS ATKINS.

[THE PROPERTY OF THE BRITISH NATION.]

TO COL. R. S. S. BADEN-POWELL, OF
MAFEKING.

A MESSAGE PER KAFFIR RUNNER.

(By Zedwhyeks.)

HERE'S to you, B.-P.,
Three times three, oversea,
We toast you and hail you!
Though Boers may assail you,
They've not got you yet, undefeated B.-P.!

Thick-witted CRONJÉ
Feared your quick repartee,
Found his plans were disjointed
By humour too pointed,
And trekked to the South from gay,
gallant B. P.

We in England agree
You deserve a V.C.,
For, with you for a starter,
The foe's caught a tartar—
In a tight place the right man's un-
daunted B.-P.

Forty million are we
Of the other "B. P.,"
And we all were more happy
If news were less scrappy
Of you and your doings, beleaguered
B.-P.!

Let us hear when you're free,
And relieved shall we be!
Send a line when you're flitting
(Engagements permitting),
That is, R.S.V.P., R.S.S.B.-P.!

KIND CONGRATULATIONS.

Selected by H. D. B.

THE following congratulatory telegrams have been taken haphazard from the vast number received by Mr. Punch. Some may contain errors, due to the haste of the telegraphists.

Gratuliere zum neuen Extrablätter. Zeitung wunderschön prachtvoll grosz-artig und kolossal. Und kostet nur 25 pfennig wie früher.—WILHELM WEBER, Württemberg.

Transmogrified paper unco fine. Expected aiblins cost extra bawbee, or even saxpence. But still wee bit threepence as auld lang syne. Hoot awa.—DONALD MACPHERSON, Glasgow Villa, Burnsville, N.S.W.

Enchanté voir nouvelles pages. Malheureusement comprends pas mot d'anglais mais admire illustrations énormément, surtout charmant en-tête nouveau feuilletton.—DUPONT, Paris.

Jó napot kívánok Angol újságokat Punch. Visszontlátásra. — BORHEGYI KÁROLY JÖZSEF, Budapest.

Bellissimo giornale anche più interessante. Favorisca mandare fascicolo ogni settimana sarà senza dubbio gratis.—REGGENTI DELLA REPUBBLICA, San Marino.

Admiramos muy hermoso periodico. Todos los habitantes besan la mano de Usted.—CONCILIO de Andorra.

Muchee appeciate extly pages. Velly topside galore. Light leading. All lightee. Chin chin.—LI HUNG CHANG.

Peux pas supporter journaux finlandais. Votre journal vient d'arriver. Admirable. Habitants savent pas lire anglais. Done ai supprimé tous journaux finlandais et autorise seul le vôtre. Attends pot-de-vin habituel. Si ne regois pas supprimerai aussi le vôtre.—GOUVERNEUR, Helsingfors, Finlande.

Send duftar of Punch price three annas, worth one lakh.—Kitmutgar of KHAN OF KALAT.

Real smart.—WASHINGTON Y. WOOD, New York, U.S.A.

Tuku usironga Punchu bulliboo.—MALIETOA, Samoa.

Nquakquak hehaw mbowow.—HULLA-BALOO, Mpala, Congo Free State.



PORTRAIT OF A CALCULATING GENTLEMAN (NOT AT ALL A BAD LOOKING CHAP) WHO HAS SOLVED THE PROBLEM AS TO
 WHETHER WE ARE IN THE NINETEENTH OR TWENTIETH CENTURY.

PRIMA / 1900



alled

ur.

DRACCA

GRIT

The State

ENSON

RISTOL

st. 1/7.

ND PRO

IT

profitable

grow.

aluable

DS

PROCURE

Free.

ES

S of THOUS

riety. Paid

for Cash

60.

Nursery

age Journal

from 15/-

Free, as

Collect

abacous

area of

0,000/ from

the Plants

increased

be born
French
America
is the
no wal
on the
and in
million
on the
fifteen
three
machin
opine
I come
and th
anothe
Boy
Don
bigge
contro
souls,
food t
can g
that u
makes
the fo
at a
strong
Canac
Oh,
than
me, I

from 15/-
Free, as
Collect
abacous
area of
0,000/ from
the Plants
increased
CATAL
pages of N
y produc
divers of
valuable
script of 21
mention the
Co., W



HY, yes, Sir,
I have
had my
ups and
downs to
be sure.
On our

side—I've come to think of
myself as an American citizen,
because I happened to

be born in the island of St. Helena, and my mother was a Frenchwoman and my father an Irishman: that makes me an American, doesn't it?—I say, on our side the elevator system is the one on which fortunes are made and unmade. There's no walking upstairs in the States. You step into the elevator on the ground floor without a red; whisk goes the machine, and in ten seconds you're on the fifteenth storey and a millionaire. You step in again—whisk it goes and you are on the ground floor, a pauper. I've stepped out on the fifteenth floor twice, and I've found myself on the ground floor three times. A month ago I was there, but I heard the machinery give a click when I hit on the Great Pie Trust, and I opine that I'm about the tenth floor up just now. That's how I come to have a state cabin all to myself aboard this steamer, and that's why I'm going to ask you to honour me by sharing another bottle of boy with me.

Boy!

Don't you fear, Sir; the Pie Trust will be a big thing—the biggest thing I ever handled. Just think what it will be to control the supply of the staple comestible of twenty million souls, not counting niggers, who don't want to see any other food than pie for the rest of their natural life. And then if we can get it brought into the old country! I think I told you that my mother was born in St. Helena. I suppose that's what makes me feel that I'm English to the backbone. I never see the folds of the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes entwined at a Music-Hall or a bazaar without feeling that blood is stronger than water, though it hasn't a chance alongside Canadian Club.

Oh, yes, Sir, I allow that I've been on the ground floor more than once. The Guava Jelly Syndicate? Well, yes, that landed me, I allow. But how was I to know that there'd be no show

for guava jelly [made from sea-weed—pure sea-weed without any adulteration, mind you? The Grand Mammoth Operatic Combination? Well, I don't count that among my failures. I always look on it as a miss in baulk—it did well enough, to start the game.

You'll do me the justice to admit that I did my level best to see the G. M. O. C. through? What, you never heard all I did for the company? Well, I'm not surprised. Folks never tire talking of a man's mistakes, but they treat his best things as confidential communications. I'm proud to have this opportunity of wiping that blot from my record.

You've heard so much that may be you were kept abreast of the commercial side of the G. M. O. C. during the seven months of its existence. No? Well, Sir, you're now going to be placed in a position to write the financial chapter of its biography. I started that show with exactly twenty-five pounds. How do I recollect exactly? Well, in handling big figures like that a man's memory is apt to mix things up, but only a week ago, when I was packing up to get aboard the cars at the deepo, I came across the ticket for the watch, chain, and sundries on which I raised my original capital for the G. M. O. C.

Now twenty-five pounds is, if anything, under rather than over the sum necessary for starting a first-class opera company—an impresario has so many incidental expenses at the outset if he wants to do things properly. But I knew something of the weaknesses of vocalists, and I knew that that knowledge would stand to me. It did. My *prima donna assoluta* was the widow of a Brixton ladies' tailor, who had left her comfortably off. She began to take lessons at the age of forty-two, and she made an ideal Daughter of the Regiment; she wasn't quite stout enough for *Lucy of Lammermoor*, and, of course, she hadn't yet reached the years that the public look for in a representative of *Margaret in Faust*, but one can't have everything.

I hadn't. I only had enough money to go on with—that is, to let her go on with. Her name was (in the bills) Madame ELEANORA BATES. Then my contralto was, according to the paragraphs in the papers, the daughter of one of the best known Earls in all the English aristocracy. His name appeared on the first page—why not call it the title page at once?—of a good many prospectuses. She wanted nothing except to become recognised as the legitimate successor to ALRONI. I offered her this position for the merest trifle, far under the market value,

and she accepted it. My leading tenor had been in the commission business, and having been bankrupt three times, was in a position to plank down a moderate sum to be admitted as the legitimate successor to MARIO and SIMS REEVES. I admitted him.

My baritone was a musical genius. A musical genius is a man who has failed in everything. The only thing that my baritone hadn't failed in was opera. I gave him a chance of supplying this one omission, and he availed himself of my offer with gratitude. My *basso profundo* had done some good work with a panorama, but his only professional engagement previous to the one I gave him was in connection with exhibiting the possibilities of the megaphone—the instrument by which ships a couple of miles apart can converse with one another. To be sure it was said that upon one occasion, being aboard a steamer whose siren fog-horn had gone astray, he had supplied its place for some days off the banks of Newfoundland so efficiently, that even the most sensitive passengers had remained in total ignorance of the fact that the steam siren was out of gear; but though he was the means, under Providence, of saving the ship and every soul aboard, he was too modest to count this among his professional feats.

My chorus was made up chiefly of Duchesses, who had exhausted all other means of advertising themselves, and various members of the aristocracy.

Before starting on my tour I expressed myself, through the medium of the newspapers, heart and soul on the side of the advocates of a subsidised opera-house and municipally supported music. Haven't the public free libraries, free parks, free education, and why shouldn't they have a national opera-house, I asked. I'm afraid that this letter told against me in the provinces. I remember that one critic, referring to my production of *Carmen*—a really creditable representation it was, even though we were obliged to cut out the part of the *Toreador*—said that such performances would be dear even if supplied gratis.

Well, Sir, you know that that combination of mine didn't succeed financially, though artistically beyond reproach. That shows how imperative it is that the State—but I'll not open up that old question of a national subsidy for opera. I'll hurry on to the sequel. When my last pound had gone I began to think what a disaster it would be for the members of the company if they were to be disbanded and cast once more on the world, so I set about trying to find in what direction I could make use profitably of their talents. A week or two had gone by before I hit upon a plan that had all the elements of success in it. As soon as I perceived that the scheme was a thoroughly practical one, I laid it before the members of my company, and it was received with every expression of enthusiasm by all, except those few malcontents who are to be found in every company, artistic as well as commercial. The two elements are not invariably found associated.

My scheme was, briefly, to open a Store in some well populated locality, and put the members of the company into it as assistants in the various departments.

Of course the idea was startling—I meant it to be startling. I had a doctor once attending on me when I had neuralgia. He prescribed quinine, and told me that there was no use taking it in small doses. I must take a large enough dose to "surprise the system"—that was his phrase, "surprise the system"—and I have found that one must act on this principle in order to succeed commercially. One must take the public by surprise. I reckoned that the public would be surprised at the idea of having their wants supplied to the strains of high-class music, and so they were. But this is anticipating.

After due thought, I came to the conclusion that I should open in soft goods and millinery, so as to give the ladies as well as the gentlemen in my company a chance of exercising their skill and artistic training. It took me quite a week finding a promising locality in the West End for commencing my operations,

and another week stocking it properly in all its departments—these things are not done in a day, I can tell you. And before I got my company properly rehearsed, a third week had gone by. Meantime, I had advertised the enterprise very freely, and the public were wondering what was meant by the announcement that "HOSKINS' Mammoth Millinery Combination would be conducted on strictly operative lines," and that "in all departments the highest-class artistes had been engaged." Knowledge of the fact that the *primo tenore* of the hosiery department would be Signor ALFIERI (né THOMPSON), and that the *prima donna* of the *passementerie* would be Madame ELEANORA BATES—that Madame HELOISE DE LA CRUSCA had been specially engaged for the bonnet department—she was the lightest of soprani: it would be useless to try to sell gauzy hats through the medium of a contralto—knowledge of these facts, I say, may not have meant much to the public at large, any more than the announcement that the dress and mantle chorus had been largely augmented, and that the *corps de ballet* in the chiffon department would be found to include some artistes of European reputation; or that the baritone in huckaback towels (a special line) would be Signor MARTINI (from the Belfast *Conservatoire de Lingerie*). No, but I felt sure that these announcements would arouse curiosity.

The result proved that I had not over-estimated the impressionable nature of the general public. Even while the outside chorus were removing the shutters on the opening day, a crowd of considerable dimensions had assembled, and an encore was most heartily accorded to the rendering of the beautiful "Salesman's Chorus," adapted by my poet—I had hired a poet who occupied the highest place as an exponent of pure modern Celtic (his credentials were signed by a brother Celtic bard) to do my libretto for all the departments, and I will say that he did his work well: the symbolism of his verses had, I have reason to believe, a marked effect in increasing the rapidity of the sales.

The "Salesman's Chorus" as adapted, ran like this:—

Glory and love to the men of old,
But my aunt! the price of the goods they sold!
Our system here is cash in hand—
On or before delivery, I trust you understand.

The adaptation of the chorus was considered by excellent judges to be well down to the level of the original; I don't profess to know much about the *nuances* of poetry myself: anyhow, I will say that it served to get the shutters down and made an effective entrance for the *tenore robusto*, who appeared as the glass doors opened, in his new frock coat and light pants, singing, with appropriate gestures,

When other lips and other hearts
Their tale of gloves shall tell,
Advertisement its aid imparts
To such as live to sell.
But adventitious is such aid
You never must forget
Unless your cheapest *gants de suède*
Fit like *gants de chevrete*.
Oh, let me like a soldier fall
To pay a fortnight's rent,
If we upon an average sale
Make more than five per cent.

His dramatic action carried conviction to every one who heard him, and before the baritone shop-walker had done more than deliver the first stanza of his aria:—

The heart bowed down with weight of woe,
No longer need despair.
We sell our knickerbocker hose
At four and three a pair,

we were doing a brisk trade in several lines. By the afternoon we needed three extra policemen to regulate the traffic, and I began to perceive that I was right in my belief that there exists in England a thorough appreciation for music in its highest

forms. All that is needed is to approach the public in a proper spirit. One should not assume that music is the end of everything, but should put it in its right place; it is merely a means of attaining an end. Music is the means, and merchandise is the end.

Of course there was a little confusion at first. The shop-walkers' recitatives—founded on VERDI—were apt to get a little mixed. When a lady customer entered enquiring for huckabacks, and the baritone shop-walker sang in the most approved recitativo:—

Where yonder iron pillar rears its head
To the Lincrusta ceiling,
Its high artistic charms revealing,
Your footsteps, madam, must be stealing
Ere the last huckaback be fled,

it so happened that the tenor was directing another customer to the underclothing through the medium of the Gavotte in

Mignon:—

First to the left are the underclothes,
All our underclothing would be
difficult to beat.

To the left your trembling feet—
Can we show you the latest thing in
hose?

Unfortunately the first customer listened to the tenor—as women will—and she consequently found herself among the underclothing instead of the huckabacks. However, when she was addressed by the rising young contralto, who had charge of the flower department, in the aria from *Faust*:—

Gentle flowers, 3s. 2d.,
And some 2s. 3d.,
Oh, our stock is extensive,
And all quite inexpensive.
I assure you it's true
Between you and me,

she was so captivated by the method of the artiste, that she bought nine shillings' worth of the artificial flowers. There was a triumph of art over economy for you!

It was the same in every department. People who came for imitation lace trimming, heard the strains floating from the mantle chorus, and we hadn't enough mantles left to go round. But I think I may safely claim for the hosiery ballet the amplest recognition of the day. I thought that the adaptation of the duet, *La ci darem la mano*, at the glove counter, admirably sung as it was by a baritone and soprano whom I had promoted from the chorus, would have cleared us of sixes and six-and-a-quarter sizes before the afternoon, but truth compels me to admit that the glove department was deserted when the hosiery ballet appeared. You see, they showed off the stock to the greatest advantage, and gentlemen who were languidly buying four-fold collars by the half dozen, left the shop, after witnessing the ballet, with dozens of pairs of silk stockings to be sent to their clubs for them. We got rid of fifteen gross in the course of the afternoon, and had telephoned to the wholesale warehouse for sixty gross more to be delivered the first thing in the morning.

The same thing happened the next day, only more so. It took six of the finest men in the police force to control the traffic and to regulate the queue. As before, the hosiery department

attracted the best paying customers, and all restrictions with regard to smoking were withdrawn. I began to feel proud of being the impresario who had restored the old ballet of Italian opera to its legitimate place, and I hoped that the opportunity would shortly be given to a new TAGLIONI to show us what the poetry of motion really was in the days when the ballet was the most important element of opera.

Unfortunately, however, the success of the hosiery department caused a good deal of heart burning among the vocalists. I tried to explain to the *primo tenore* that his failure to do a first-class trade was due to his want of adaptability to the requirements of his customers. He lost the sale of a dozen shirts through his dwelling for an absurd time on the high C in his recitative, introducing the cavatina, when his customer was an elderly gentleman hurrying for a train. The *primo tenore* took my remonstrances very badly. He gave himself airs, and

I was forced to remind him that I had taken him from the commission business and set him down among artistes.

There was a coolness between the *primo tenore* and his impresario, and he became more *décolleté* than ever in his collars. Then, after a fortnight's splendid business, I began to be a little bit alarmed to find that my lady customers were a good deal less numerous than those of the opposite sex. I rejected the obvious notion of a football costume ballet for my basses and my tenors, not because I thought it lacking in the elements of a popular success, but simply because I had good reason to doubt the suitability of my staff to so trying a costume, more especially as they were all eager to adopt it. As a compromise I thought of a pyjama ballet, for I knew that that voluminous costume was safe to conceal their deficiencies of limb. I took good care that it did, but in spite of that, the gentlemen's department was crowded daily with ladies anxious to buy up my stock of pyjamas in all sizes. What a lady could do



Began beating the tenor with the pasteboard box.

with six dozen striped silk, blue and yellow, I never could find out—as a matter of fact, I made no attempt to find out. I had nothing to do with that question. It was enough for me to work heart and soul for the re-establishment of English opera on a sound financial basis in England.

And I would have succeeded eventually if it hadn't been for the petty jealousies of the leading members of the company.

Of course the *primo tenore* was at the bottom of the business, though, as usual, the *prima donna* was not blameless. If ever you are running an opera company and find yourself ready to kick some members of the company, begin upon the tenor—you'll be quite safe—and be sure that you kick hard.

It was perfectly well known that my *prima donna*—she had chosen the *passementerie* department, with the mezzo at the ready-made blouse counter—had for some time been desperately in love with the leading tenor, and of course he encouraged her—he encouraged them all; it's wonderful how many young women, and old women too, for that matter, an adult tenor can encourage. And all too soon it came to the lady's ears that he

was spending his time with a customer of means who simply haunted his department—he had gone into silk ties. That customer—there is no need to mention her name at this time, though if you insist on it, I'll write it down on a piece of paper for you—had for some weeks been the sole support of the ties; she had bought in all about two gross of sailors' knots as well as other forms of the made-up article, and she was still buying.

Of course she had money—no one without money to spend on worthless objects need aspire to be in love with a tenor—and my tenor seemed delighted to have an audience at last. She usually arrived about nine in the morning, and she remained among the ties, with intervals for refreshment, until six in the evening. It was rumoured that he sang through three entire operas for her daily, except on those days when he sang through "Parsifal." He could barely manage to get through three acts of that masterpiece in the course of a nine hours working day.

You will understand how diffident I was about interfering in so delicate a matter as this. If the lady had not continued buying ties by the dozen I would have been compelled to close the department and transfer the tenor to the table-cloths. But when I found that the customers in the *passenterie* department were being neglected by the *prima donna*, who used to leave her counter and hang about the ties, I felt bound to remonstrate both with the tenor and the soprano. Neither of them took the remonstrance in good part, I regret to say. The tenor was so insolent that I only wish I had begun the kicking of him there and then; but the dramatic soprano was ominously silent, which was rather an unusual attitude for a dramatic soprano to assume.

She was not quite so silent the next morning at ten fifteen, when the notes of the tenor vibrated through the building in his impassioned rendering of the cavatina:—

Still so gently o'er me stealing
Pink betray- artistic feeling
Spite a touch of green revealing,
Peacock blue, I love thee still!

It was, strictly speaking, quite in the way of business—the business of his part—to press his customer's hand as she examined the texture of the peacock-blue tie which he was submitting to her notice, but it was decidedly unfortunate that he adopted such a gesture just at that moment, for Madame ELEANORA BATES, who had been watching the scena from the door, rushed wildly between the tenor and the lady with a shriek in the high F sharp, and tearing the peacock-blue tie into small shreds, she flung them into the customer's face, and then began beating the tenor with the pasteboard box containing the remaining stock of peacock-blue made-ups, until a heavy blow on his crown caused his head to go through the bottom of the box and fixed it firmly round his neck.

You can well believe that, after this *contretemps*, I had great difficulty in preventing a breach of the peace from taking place. It took me close upon half an hour satisfying the customer that the entrance of the dramatic soprano and her subsequent action were strictly in keeping with the spirit of the scena. Art lovers such as we were, I explained, should always be prepared to make some sacrifices for the sake of consistency, though I regretted to say the lyric stage had become deplorably lax in true artistic feeling during recent years.

It took, I say, half an hour of this sort of reasoning to satisfy the lady; but I'm sorry to say that the same space of time and an equal amount of argument only served to increase my tenor's thirst for revenge. I tried to reason with him calmly and quietly, asking him for precedents for the carrying out of a scheme of revenge by a tenor against a soprano; but all my arguments went for nothing.

I told him to go to—well, to go back to his commission business: it was Nottingham lace curtains that he had to do with before I took him up, though his most notable bankruptcy was achieved in cheap umbrellas.

Then I left him staggering under the blow, and went to the

prima donna to try to mollify her by announcing to her my dismissal of the tenor. She was mollified, yes, after undergoing a course of reasoning. But she was silent, ominously silent, and so abstracted that she sang the soprano part of the *Miserere* scena from *Il Trovatore*, instead of the *romanza* from *Mignon*:—

Knowest thou that dear land
Where the Whitby jet grows?

I am afraid that the customers went away without buying their jet trimmings from her counter, and I told her that this must not occur again.

She smiled.

The next day there was an unrehearsed scene in almost every department of the Operatic Stores. The spiteful soprano had spent half the night writing letters. One was to the wife of the tenor, another was to the husband of the customer in whose ear the tenor was accustomed to sing his operas. The husband of the customer entered at one door of the department, and the wife of the tenor entered by the other, just when the vocalist was clasping the lady's hand and dwelling on his high C.

The meeting of the pair with the tenor between them was more than lyric, it was positively epic.

I managed to save the lower part of his coat and one of his patent leather boots, but that was the most that I could do for him. The unfortunate man rushed into the Irish linens, followed by the husband beating him with a Malacca cane-handled, silver-mounted umbrella, at thirty-two and nine, and while they were gone the two wives fought—appropriately enough—with *en tous cas*.

It was while I was trying to pacify the ladies, without going so far as to get between them, that I became aware of an outbreak in the hosiery department. I left the combatants with a hurried apology, and rushed to the new scene of conflict. The *prima donna*, stung to a point of madness by the attention obtained by the hosiery ballet while she was comparatively neglected, had evidently written to the wives of some of the gentlemen who were among my best customers for silk hose, and down the wives had come and were engaged in flinging parcels of the latest sales at their husbands, and in the faces of the *prima ballerina* and her sister artistes.

A shriek came from the corset department; I hurried there only to find that the corset as a missile is much more trustworthy than a bundle of hose. But before I had mastered even this simple truth, the husbands, who had been warned by that malicious woman of the interest that their wives were taking in the pyjama ballet, were distributing the stock in the soft goods department with great freedom.

For five minutes the Operatic Stores were in the hands of a raging mob, and the police had telephoned for all the ambulances available in the neighbourhood.

I believed that the fortune of the Stores would be made so soon as an account of the incident should get into the papers. But I had misunderstood the malevolence of the *prima donna*. She had written to an inspector of the County Council, and the next day he served me with a summons for permitting singing and dancing on my premises without a licence.

That's how my well-meant attempt to place English opera on a firm artistic basis failed, and that's how I have become a staunch supporter of the principles of the municipalization of opera. Boy!

F. Frankfort Moore

Next Week—"A New Intruder," by
MAX PEMBERTON.